

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 14, line 22, as follows:

-- In an illustrative embodiment, a wedging portion 52 secures the distal portion 14 of needle 12 within inner bearing 24. Wedging portion 52 is pivotally mounted to inner bearing 24 (FIGS. 2, 4 and 5) or pivotally formed with the inner bearing, for example, by forming a living hinge 58.--

Please amend the sentence beginning at page 16, line 1, as follows:

-- The latching arm 48 prevents inner bearing 24 from retracting telescopically in a distal direction thus retaining the shield assembly 22 in a fully extended configuration.--

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 16, line 3, as follows:

-- In an illustrative embodiment, a wedging portion 52 secures the distal end 14 of needle 12 within inner bearing 24. Wedging portion 52 is pivotally mounted to inner bearing 24 or pivotally formed with the inner bearing, for example, by forming a living hinge 58.--